



The Long Knife

A MAGAZINE BY AND FOR THE 4TH BCT, 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION



Inside this issue



An Iraqi Army Soldier, working with Coalition Forces, removes unexploded ordnance and prepares it for demolition.

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COVER PHOTO: Kiowa pilot, 1st Lt. Lori Bigger, B Troop, 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, conducts radio checks as part of her preflight inspection of her OH-58 helicopter before a mission Jan. 10. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Paula Taylor)

BACK COVER PHOTO: In loving memory of our fallen comrades who lost their lives Jan. 15: Sgt. Ian Anderson, Staff Sgt. John Cooper, 2nd Lt. Mark Daily and Cpl. Matthew Grimm, and on Jan. 19: Sgt. 1st Class Russell Borea and on Jan. 22: Spc. Nicholas Brown. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brian Sipp)

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A message from Long Knife 6



I will begin this month's message by expressing my most sincere condolences to the families, friends, comrades, and communities of the courageous and devoted Soldiers who were injured or lost their lives fighting for the freedoms that our nation holds to be great and true. We will never let the memory of these Soldiers be forgotten. I want to thank Fort Bliss, the rear detachment commander, his staff, family support groups, and all of El Paso for your support in this time of loss. I also want to thank the Chaplain Corps, stress management, and command teams here on Forward Operating Base Marez for your support to our Soldiers. I ask that you stay vigilant to support not only our deployed Soldiers, but to support one another, now, and after we return.

The brigade staff is working hard to support brigade-level operations and facilitate the requirements and needs of each battalion. Each unit has unique and specific tasks to contribute to the success of the Long Knife Brigade. Both the 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion and 27th Brigade Support Battalion are doing their part supporting the maneuver battalions with route clearance, military police, military intelligence, maintenance, and logistical support. They are the life line of this unit; without them, we could not eat, shoot, move, or communicate.

The 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment has a new mission that will ultimately assist in the success of the Iraqi army here in the north. Their primary mission is to support the Military Transition Teams. They advise, coach, teach, and mentor Iraqi security forces, and provide direct access to coalition capabilities such as air support, artillery, medical, engineer, logistics, evacuation, and intelligence gathering. The 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment is now responsible for the entire area of Mosul in conjunction with a capable Iraqi army and police force. Together they will work to bring the bad guys to justice. The 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment has a similar mission as 2-7 Cav, but in the south, in and around the town of Qayarah.

They also operate with capable Iraqi army and police officers. The 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment is in Baghdad operating under the direct supervision of the 1st Cav. Div.. They are doing great things in Baghdad and we support them fully in their operations and activities. We have additional assets or units that are not from Fort Bliss. We have 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, who are responsible for the west side of Ninewa Province, performing duties similar to 5-82 FA. The 237th Forward Support Battalion, around the city of Tal Afar a National Guard unit out of Springfield, Ohio, provides support for FOB Marez through base defense and base support operations. Last, but not least, we have 1st Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry Regiment, a helicopter squadron out of Fort Bragg, N.C.. They provide air support for the entire brigade.



The Iraqi army and police here are very successful and proactive in removing anti-Iraqi forces from their streets and make our job easier. The Long Knife brigade is working hard to assist them to remove these forces

from Mosul and its surrounding hamlets. They are really making a difference in helping Iraq maintain its democratic society. There are two Iraqi army divisions that we work with on a daily basis, the 2nd and 3rd Iraqi Army Divisions. Both of them operate independently without our assistance. Iraqi leaders have the lead on all military and police actions and operations, we just provide support for them when requested.

I'd like to take the time to commend our Soldiers for performing their duties in a professional manner. They have shown their mettle by providing security, not only for themselves and the brigade, but also for the citizens of Ninewa Province. From the individual Soldier to the unit as a whole, we are doing a superb job. Just remember that this deployment is not a sprint, but a marathon. With just three months behind us, we have several more to go. With teamwork, here and at home, we can undoubtedly accomplish our goals and complete the mission.

IA taught 'Warrior Ethos' by Black Dragons

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. 1ST CLASS BRIAN SIPP
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

Q-WESTBASE COMPLEX, Iraq – Overcoming fatigue, a grueling physical fitness schedule, hours of intense close-quarters combat drills, and the ever-present language barrier, 20 non-commissioned officers from the Iraqi security forces took their skills to the next level by graduating from a joint Iraqi and 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division NCO Academy at Q-West Jan. 26.

Incorporating the best parts of the U.S. Army's NCO professional development schools system and elements of the Iraqi Army training doctrine, Soldiers from the 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment teamed with instructors from the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division to administer the 21-day course to eligible ISF NCOs.

"The primary focus is leadership," said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Melton, commandant of the academy, 5-82 FA. "The NCOs are trained in over 30 areas to include hand-to-hand combat, marksmanship, physical fitness, and leadership principles, just to name a few," added Melton.

"We want the graduates to take everything they have learned back to their unit," said 1st Sgt. Hussein, deputy commandant, 2-3-2 IA. "These graduates will be the backbone of the new Iraqi Army [and security forces]," he added.

While the three-week course is a little bit shorter than the U.S. equivalent, the pace and tempo is accelerated to make-up for the

difference. Essential tasks are all taught in a real-world environment and the chance for real-world practical exercises is, quite literally, just outside the gate and down the block.

Rounding out the graduation of Class 04-07 is the traditional choosing of the top achievers of the cycle; and this class was no different. Awards were presented to Muhand Aziz Jassim, as Distinguished Honor Graduate; Yousef Hussien Ali, as receiving the highest score on the Army Physical Fitness Test; Hussan Ismeal Bakur, voted by his peers as the Leadership Award Winner; Khalid Abdullah Sulyman, Combat Gladiator Award signifying the best in Hand-to-hand combat; and Fiesel Khuthier Khudeda, Marksmanship Award, signifying the best score at the weapons range, according to Sgt. David Gilmore, academy administration specialist, 5-82 FA, and an Artesia, N.M. native.

"The NCO academy is a real beginning toward the establishment of a new Iraqi Army," said Command Sgt. Maj. Farhan, command sergeant major of 3rd Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division and the guest speaker at the graduation. "It is my hope that these graduates will use what they learned to protect their country."

As the graduation completed and the newly-trained NCOs accepted their certificates of completion, they joined together in reciting the Warrior Ethos of the Iraqi Soldier, a modified version of the U.S. Soldiers' Warrior Ethos that embodies the values of teamwork, mission-first mentality, and perseverance in the



Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Melton, commandant, 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, (left) congratulates an Iraqi noncommissioned officer from Class 04-07 graduating from the joint Iraqi and 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division NCO Academy at Q-West Base Complex, Iraq Jan. 26.

face of adversity.

"A course like this, that incorporates so much diversity, and tries to instill common themes of discipline and leadership, has lots of challenges to overcome and requires a lot of patience on the parts of both the Iraqi and Black Dragon instructors," said Sgt 1st Class Luis Perez, liaison officer, 5-82 FA. "It also gives everyone involved a tremendous optimism and sense of accomplishment when they succeed. These guys did an outstanding job and people of Iraq should be proud of the type of soldiers and leaders in the ISF."

Air cavalry provides eyes over battlefield

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT. PAULA TAYLOR
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

MOSUL, Iraq—Soldiers of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, based out of Fort Bragg, N.C., who are now attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, have been taking to the skies to provide eyes in the air for ground troops.

One of those troopers is 1st Lt. Lori Bigger, platoon leader and OH-58 Kiowa helicopter pilot, from San Antonio, Texas. A quick thinker who has been flying in the Army for two years now, Bigger said she is responsible for the maintenance of the equipment, keeping accountability of six pilots and six crew chiefs and assisting the commander in day-to-day operations. “I’m just one member on a team, flying missions over the city. I enjoy the people I work with. A lot of them have strong personalities and are self-starters. There’s a lot of knowledge these guys bring to the table.”

Bigger said there are many times when being able to think quickly has come in handy while she’s flying missions. “You have to keep an open mind. You’re always learning something new up there. Once you start to feel comfortable, things will change. You have to be able to change your tactics to stay one step ahead of the enemy. A lot of what we

do is unplanned and from-the-hip. The mission can change quickly. You may be providing convoy security and get a call that someone is taking fire and have to go cover them.”

The missions the troop has been flying are a key factor in helping

on top of the action, said Bigger. “We can help the ground commander have situational awareness of his people so he can move them as he needs to.”

Bigger’s unit has been operating around the Mosul area for about six months now, she said, and are conducting 24-hour operations. “The troop as a whole will fly about 900 hours each month,” she added.

Keeping the helicopters up and running are the crew chiefs who work in 12-hour shifts. “We maintain the aircraft so the pilots can support the missions,” said Sgt. Jeremy Wendt, crew chief shift supervisor, and Napoleon, Ohio, resident. “If there are any maintenance problems, or issues that come up as a result of being attacked outside the FOB, we fix them. We’re running 24-hour-a-day ops here.

Any time we have birds in the air, we have someone here working on them. We’ve got our guys working non-stop.”

Wendt said he is proud of his crew and hopes the families back home feel the same way. “I’m really proud of the work that we’re doing, how hard we’re doing it and how fast-paced we’re working. The missions the pilots are going out on—putting themselves in harm’s way—and the maintainers being able to keep up that operational tempo is impressive. I’m very proud of the mission and everyone back home should be proud. We have an important mission to support the units on the ground.”



Kiowa pilot, 1st Lt. Lori Bigger, platoon leader, B Troop, 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, conducts radio checks during her preflight inspection of the OH-58 helicopter on Forward Operating Base, Marez Jan. 10.

to keep the Soldiers, who are operating within the city, safe. “We are providing air surveillance and security in support of the ground units,” said Bigger. “We are a deterrent because when the ground forces are taking fire and we come into the area, the engagement pretty much ceases and the firing stops. At that point, we try to see if there is anyone leaving the area [on foot] or if there are cars moving away [from the scene].”

Another of the benefits to having the air surveillance teams is they can get a wide-angle view from above of what’s happening, unlike the commander down below who is right

3-4 Cav trains Iraqis to monitor Syrian border

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. PAULA TAYLOR
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

RABIYAH, Iraq—Several Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 4th Cavalry Regiment, based out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division from Fort Bliss, Texas, have been working with more than 500 Iraqi Army troops to secure the Syrian border.

In a meeting Jan. 4 with the 4th BCT commander, Col. Stephen Twitty, the 3-4 Cavalry explained their confidence in the 1st Battalion, 3rd Iraqi Army Brigade's ability to man the border checkpoint outside Combat Outpost Heider.

"We have been training the Iraqis to neutralize the anti-Iraqi forces in order to transition the security lead to the IA," said Capt. Paul Curry, commander, A Troop, 3-4 Cavalry. "We are confident that they will be able to maintain the necessary level of security to keep the AIF from crossing that border."

Since taking over the area surrounding COP Heider nine months ago, Curry said his unit has been able to double the amount of Iraqi checkpoints and lessen the violence in the city of Rabiya.

"The increase in checkpoints has provided greater presence in the [area], which in turn reduces the freedom of maneuver for AIF," he said. "Additionally, the increased ISF unilateral operations have helped restore confidence in the local populace and has provided more [human intelligence] and refined AIF information."



Coalition Soldiers with the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, assist the Iraqi Army in managing the checkpoint in Rabiya, Iraq, at the Syrian border Jan. 4. Vehicles coming through the checkpoint to enter the country are searched and the driver's load manifest and documentation is inspected before being allowed to enter.



Coalition Soldiers assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment work with Iraqi Army troops from the 1st Battalion, 3rd Army Brigade at a border checkpoint in Rabiya, Iraq, Jan. 4.

PJCC provides Mosul citizens with assistance

STORY AND PHOTO BY MAJ. RODERICK CUNNINGHAM
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

MOSUL, Iraq – The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division's brigade operational legal team, and the 403rd Civil Affairs Detachment conducted civil military operations center activities at the Provincial Joint Coordination Center Jan. 12.

"The PJCC provides an easy and safe means for the local citizens of Mosul to submit claims for damage to their property or persons. This process has been in place on the military installation for more than a year," said Maj. John Hodge, commander A Company, 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion, of Huntington, W. Va.

"The purpose of the PJCC is to receive claims from Iraqi citizens who have been involved in accidents or escalation of force incidents with the Coalition Forces," he continued.

"The residents of Mosul conveyed to the district and provincial government that they did not feel comfortable entering U.S. military installations because of possible observation by anti-Iraqi forces and potential for extortion or bodily harm," said Hodge.

As a result of these comments, Hodge explained, Coalition Forces and the Iraqi government worked together to find a location in the city that will provide the citizens what they require, thus the PJCC was established. The benefits of this location to the Iraqi people are accessibility and security.

"Coalition Forces are more than willing to accommodate the local populace in an effort to ensure that legitimate claims are handled in a timely, efficient, and accurate manner," said Hodge. "Recently, the PJCC handled 23 cases involving new filings, additional evidence, payments and denials, and disbursed approximately \$23,500," he added.

When Iraqis make claims for damages or injury caused by Coalition Forces, the legal team must investigate their claim. "Each week we gather new claims from Iraqis who claim they have been injured or have had their property damaged by Coalition Forces," said Capt. Carol Brewer, brigade judge advocate, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. of Long Island, N.Y. "The BOLT team gathers evidence to support or deny these claims. If they find support in our records to verify the claim, they can recommend payment, and if it is approved,



Maj. John Hodge, commander, A Company, 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion, of Huntington, W.Va., reviews documentation to reimburse an Iraqi citizen for damages as Navy Lt. James Leineweber of Tucson, Ariz., and Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Turner of Knoxville, Tenn., (left) provide legal guidance and assistance.

they will make a payment to the Iraqi to compensate them for the damage we caused," she continued.

"When we cannot show that the damage was caused by non-combat related actions, we, the Coalition Forces, must deny the claim," said Brewer. "These Iraqis are referred to the Mosul Provincial Hall for the Iraqi government officials to address. This is a tool for the command to show the Iraqi people that we are here to help them and make it right when we do cause some injury or damage," she said.

An example of a claim is when a man was unintentionally shot during an escalation of force, said Hodge. "Coalition Forces were patrolling when anti-Iraqi forces detonated an improvised explosive device attacking the convoy. They also began firing at them. Coalition Forces returned fire, and in the ensuing firefight, a local national was shot and killed by a stray bullet," said Hodge. "Even though there was no way to determine whether the local national was shot by Coalition Forces or anti-Iraqi forces, Coalition Forces desired to offer a condolence payment to the family of the deceased. A payment of 3,700,000 Iraqi Dinar (\$2,500 US) was paid to the widow," he continued. "This payment is not an admission of guilt," Hodge explained, "but rather a gift of money in an effort to lessen the burden of lost income, funeral expenses, and somewhat pain and suffering for the loss."



Staff Sgt. Luis Sanchez, a MEDEVAC crew chief from Palm Bay, Fla., checks the rear rotor of his UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter Dec. 21, at Forward Operating Base Sykes near Tal Afar, Iraq. Sanchez, who's assigned to Company C, 3rd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, is conducting pre-flight checks as part of his unit's normal morning maintenance routine.

MEDEVAC crew delivers from remote corner of Iraq

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. ARMANDO MONROIG**
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

TAL AFAR, Iraq – For Soldiers injured in the remote areas of northwest Iraq, the country's expansive desert stands between medical attention and possible death.

Smaller towns like Rabiya, Biaj and Al Nimr lie up to a two-hour drive from the nearest medical facility in Mosul.

That's where medical evacuation air crews come in. They are the rapid medical responders to injuries on the battlefield.

"We get from here to there and we keep people alive," said Staff Sgt. Ben Walker, a flight medic from Paris, Tenn., who belongs to Forward Support Medical Team Four, located at Forward Operating Base Sykes in

Tal Afar.

Walker's team is formed by members of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The crew, which consists of a pilot, co-pilot, crew chief and flight medic, uses a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter to fly patients to Mosul's 399th Combat Support Hospital.

At least two of the MEDEVAC crews at FOB Sykes remain on standby around the clock. Helicopters are serviced each day to ensure each is ready for flight.

For more seriously injured patients, the first hour is the most critical and is known as the "golden hour," said Chief Warrant Officer Jordan Yard, the team's co-pilot. The patient has the best chances of survival if treated within an hour.

"We have to scramble," said Yard, who's from Encino, Calif. "We grab our gear, get off the ground, and do it in an expedient, but safe manner."

Walker said once they arrive at the pick-up point, patients are medically evaluated. In accordance with U.S. Army policy, the aircrews and the physicians who ultimately provide treatment for them don't discriminate between friend and foe, or Soldier and civilian.

Depending on the injury, life-saving procedures may have to be conducted once the patient is on the aircraft and enroute to a medical facility.

Most of the time, the injuries requiring treatment are relatively minor. Every now and then, the injuries are life threatening.

"Patients with head injuries wouldn't stand a chance without

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Ninewa Province making progress

STORY AND PHOTO BY MAJ. RODERICK CUNNINGHAM
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

MOSUL, Iraq – The Multi-National Division – North commander and the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division commander met with Ninewa Provincial leadership to discuss the success and challenges of the province Jan 11.

Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Mixon, commander of MND-N, Col. Stephen Twitty, commander of 4-1 Cavalry, Ninewa Provincial Governor Duraid Kashmoula, and Provincial Director of Police Maj. Gen. Wathuk shared their thoughts of the current situation and future of the three prominent cities and the remainder of Ninewa Province.

Mosul, the largest city discussed during the meeting, with roughly 1.8 million people, is situated in the northern region and is the second largest city in Iraq. Tal Afar has about 80,000 citizens and lies in the western portion of the province; and Qayyarah, which houses roughly 50,000 residents is south of Mosul located in the Tigris River Valley.

The meeting revolved around several topics, however, the recurring themes were violence in the streets and the security of the city.

“Yes, there is violence in this city. But, there is violence in American cities that have nearly two million people in their population as well,” said Mixon.

Recognizing the similar levels of violence in a comparable city in America, Twitty paints an optimistic picture of the current state of Mosul and Ninewa Province.

“Amidst the turmoil and issues that persist in Iraq, there is a semblance of peace and normalcy in the north. Ninewa’s leadership works hard to provide its citizens security, build its economy, and implement programs that will continue to keep sectarian violence from the province,” said Twitty. “One thing we cannot do is attempt to put an American standard on any Iraqi city,” said Twitty. “We have to remember that this country lived under a dictator for more than 30 years. The major and significant difference between U.S. cities and Mosul is the use of improvised explosive devices, rocket-propelled grenades, and other military – grade weapons. Anti-Iraqi forces persist in their attacks, but



Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Mixon, commander, Multi-National Division – North and 25th Infantry Division, discusses Ninewa Province’s successes and challenges during a meeting with the Ninewa Provincial Governor Duraid Kashmoula Jan. 11 in Mosul, Iraq.

the Iraqi security forces, consisting of the Iraqi Army, border patrol and police, continue to quell those attacks daily,” Twitty continued.

Both Kashmoula and Wathuk agreed that their police and army are trained; they have enough equipment to do their jobs, and are securing their streets, cities, and province.

“This province has more than 18,000 police and 20,000 Iraqi Army soldiers who provide security for its citizens,” said Kashmoula. “Both the 2nd and 3rd Iraqi Army Divisions have demonstrated that they are fully capable of assuming counter-insurgency missions by taking over operations in east and west Ninewa Province. They conducted transfer of authority ceremonies, putting them under the control of Iraqi Ground Forces Command instead of Coalition Forces,” he continued.

Mixon said he believes that with so many Iraqi security forces now working to secure their own cities in the province, it shows the diligence of the local government.

“The leaders of this province continue to make progress standing up security forces to maintain domestic order and deny terrorists from using Mosul and the other cities as a safe haven,” said Mixon.

“I applaud the success earned by the government, police, and army of Ninewa Province,” said Twitty. “They are dedicated to bringing peace to the area and they set the standard for all of Iraq.

3-4 Cavalry teaches ISF advanced first aid

STORY BY SGT. PAULA TAYLOR
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

COP NIMUR, Iraq—Troops from 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, spent four days training Iraqi security forces in first aid, and provided them with some advanced medical techniques at Combat Outpost Nimur, beginning Dec. 26.

The class consisted of 28 Iraqi Army soldiers, four Sinjar area Iraqi police and five Iraqi border policemen.

One of the instructors of the course was Sgt. Richard Kyle, combat medic, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 3-4 Cavalry, a unit based out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. “We were teaching them the Combat Lifesaver course,” he explained. “This was an initial introduction to first aid

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(U.S. Army courtesy photo by 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment)

A Headquarters and Headquarters Troop combat medic, Sgt. Richard Kyle, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, helps Iraqi Army soldiers properly insert a J-Tube during Combat Lifesaver training at COP Nimur Dec. 29.

MEDEVAC, cont'd from page 8

a MEDEVAC crew,” said Staff Sgt. Paul Nelson, the assistant noncommissioned officer in charge of emergency medical treatment for the 399th CSH.

Yard said that when Walker and Sanchez have treated seriously injured patients, those situations have been hard to handle. He also said no one can afford for him to become distracted.

“I have to stay focused on my job,” he said. “When I get there, if I don’t have to look behind me – I don’t. Those guys deal with some incredible things back there that I’m better off not knowing about it. The most important thing I can do for the effort is to stay focused, operate the equipment and get from point A to point B. That’s my job.”

Capt. Heath Holt, team leader and pilot, said it’s his job to make sure the team is ready to provide continuous MEDEVAC service throughout this desolate part of Iraq.

Doing so requires continuous preventative

maintenance and staying tuned to weather reports. He also stays apprised of military activities, such as the use of artillery or other aviation assets in the area.

“We learn what the operational picture is so we know who’s out there doing what. We try to stay ‘in the know’ with everything that’s going on in the area that we cover,” said Holt.

It’s the job of helping to save lives that makes MEDEVAC crews invaluable to the Army and its Soldiers, he said.

“Right now, the Army is the only branch of service that has a dedicated air evacuation asset for its Soldiers,” said Holt. “It’s an asset every ground commander is going to want to have, especially the further away he is from a major medical facility.”

Although Holt enjoys his job, no business is good business, he said.

“The day I don’t have to fly at all is the perfect day in my book because that means nobody got hurt. It’s a very rewarding mission at times. It’s one of those jobs you love to do, but you hate to have to do it.”

Spirit of giving felt by children in Tal Afar

STORY BY SGT. ARMANDO MONROIG
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

TAL AFAR, Iraq – While Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment continue to help improve the stability and quality of life for people living in northwestern Iraq, their relatives and friends have taken up the cause as well.



(U.S. Army photo by 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment)

Lt. Col. Malcolm Frost, commander, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, distributes school supplies to children during a recent visit to Tal Afar, Iraq. The supplies were donated by family and friends of Soldiers.

Through a voluntary program called Operation Horsemen Help, they've been able to bring the spirit of giving to the children living in Tal Afar year-round.

"I loved sending the school supplies because I knew it would bring the children of Iraq, for a brief moment, some joy," said Brenda Varga, a food service cashier at Plover-Whiting Elementary School in Stevens Point, Wis. "It makes me feel like I'm making a small contribution to someone's happiness, even if it isn't much."

Operation Horsemen Help was organized by the members of the 1-17 Cav., an aviation unit located at Forward Operating Base Sykes, just outside of Tal Afar. Soldiers of the regiment, nicknamed "Horsemen," belong to the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C.

The program is made possible by working through the unit's family readiness group, an organization of family members, soldiers and civilian employees who

provide mutual support during unit deployments.

"I think it is awesome people in the states are thinking about the children," said Varga. "They are really nice people who just want to do their part. Since they can't come over there and serve in the war, then they do their part in other ways."

About once a week, the unit receives about 10 boxes of donations, which include pens, pencils, notebooks, crayons, paper, staplers and rulers. Children also receive clothes, blankets, toys and candy.

Once the donations arrive, they're handed out by members of the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Light,) a unit also located at FOB Sykes which is responsible for patrolling the streets of Tal Afar.

Capt. Catherine Crocker, the personnel officer for the 1-17 Cav., said she appreciates the efforts of people who are trying to help out.

"I think it's great. I think that's the way we're going to win this war – through the children and changing the way they see us at an early age," said Crocker.

The donated items do make a difference, said 1st Lt. Matthew Davis, a civil military operations officer from Joliet, Ill., assigned to the 3-4 Cavalry.

"The donations help if you don't have enough fuel to heat your home," said Davis. "If you have a high unemployment rate and there is not enough income being generated by the family, then you can't afford these items."

The donations not only provide a way of helping the children in Tal Afar, they also work as a catalyst for the Iraqi police to strengthen its relationship with the community.

"While it's nice to have the locals look favorably upon U.S. Soldiers, in the long term they really need to be able to look to their own Iraqi Security Forces and know that these are people who they can trust," said Davis.

With the police's participation, the Iraqi people are more likely to sympathize with the local authorities, said Davis.

Varga's motivation comes from another source.

"I loved sending something that the children could use, something that I knew would make a difference in their lives. I want to show them the Americans love them and will try to make their lives better."

Civil Affairs teams making the difference

Coalition Forces work with Iraqi officials

STORY BY SGT. PAULA TAYLOR
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

MOSUL, Iraq—Soldiers of the U.S. Army Reserves 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion, Mattydale, N.Y., who are now attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, have been working to help rebuild northern Iraq since their arrival here eight months ago.

Capt. Liane Dare, executive officer, A Company, 403rd Civil Affairs Reserves Battalion, said her unit has about 130 troops assigned. Her company covers the eastern and southern Ninewa Province, including Mosul and Qayarah, while B Co. covers Tal 'Afar, Al Kissik, Sinjar and the surrounding area.

"Our Civil Affairs teams are composed of U.S. Army Reservists called back to active duty because of their civilian skills, and this has helped with regards to project management," said Capt. Ralph Sarmiento, executive officer, B Company.

The purpose of the civil affairs team is to meet with the local Iraqi people and find out what reconstruction projects are needed most, then help make arrangements to pay for the approved jobs, said Dare.

"We go out and conduct an assessment of the area," she said. "We talk to the mayors, muktars, sheiks and the local people and see what their complaints are, what their problems are, and identify what we can possibly do to help them. Then we try to pass that information up the Iraqi government's chain-of-command so they try to fix the problems themselves. They have a provincial council that oversees everything and they look at projects, potential projects, and what their focus is," Dare added. "Then they determine what they want to spend their money on. A provincial reconstruction team, or PRT, who works directly with the governor and directors general of the province, is located here and they also work with the U.S. State Department. We kind of feed into their stuff and they try to push what we find out from the lower local government and

mentor the Iraqis to fix their own problems—to pay for it themselves and make a process of priorities. The civil affairs personnel help the Iraqi government put together a list so they can determine exactly what needs to be done and exactly what their local governments underneath them want the focus to be and then determine if the provincial government has the same focus, or whether it's something they can afford to do right now."

**"I see the lower-enlisted
Soldiers that go out
there and do things that
captains, majors and senior
noncommissioned officers
would normally be doing."**

—Capt. Liane Dare—

One important aspect of the PRT is to meet with the Ninewa leaders as mentors, she said.

"They can make suggestions to the governor to hold a town hall meeting in an area that the governor hasn't visited in a while that may be feeling neglected," added Dare. "They also help the governor build lists

and schedules of things that need to be done and help him prioritize projects."

One challenge for the Iraqi government is that they need to make sure they are not completing too many projects in one religious sector because the locals may see it as favoritism.

"The PRT tries to help ensure the projects are divvied up equally to each religious sector of the province," she said. "The challenge is to make sure there is a political balance and that they spend the money properly so there is no suggestion that they are biased toward one area or the other."

One area that needs attention is the electricity throughout the province. "A lot of the essential services they get, they don't pay for, like we do in the U.S.," said Dare. "They pay very little for electricity, for example. For the most part, their government pays the bill. During Saddam's era, he paid for everything, but tended to favor the Sunnis, so everyone else was suffering. Now everyone has power, but it is limited. Some areas may get 18 hours of electricity per day, while other areas only get 8 hours. The reason for that is because Saddam did not allow the people to have certain items like microwaves and satellite television.



(U.S. Army courtesy photo by 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion)

Coalition Soldiers from the 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion visit with a local family from Mosul, Iraq, to hand out toys and supplies. The battalion is responsible for interacting with the local people to find out what projects in their neighborhoods they would like to have built. The information the unit collects is then handed up to the Iraqi government.

Since Saddam is gone, everyone, not just the wealthy, are allowed to purchase any appliances they choose. That freedom is overloading the circuit and the power grids can't handle it. Each neighborhood is affected differently, depending on how many of them have the niceties only the wealthy were allowed to have before. Several people have purchased generators so they can have electricity 24 hours-a-day, but the generators run on fuel, and that costs money."

To help complete projects, the local government has a Ninewa Business Center. "The goal of the NBC is to give out loans to help Iraqis open up their own business to improve economic development. The center also advertises contractor positions that are open for bidding on projects," she said.

Since Dare's unit has been here,

she said they have funded more than 40 projects in Qayarah, valued at more than \$1.7 million, and 27 projects in Mosul, totaling over \$1.8 million. Some of the projects that have been completed are: the reconstruction of schools; the building of playgrounds; renovating gyms and pools; water, sewer and cleanup projects; providing medical and food supplies; and road repair and bridge work.

In B Co., Sarmiento said his unit has also spent millions of dollars on various projects.

"B Company has completed over 70 projects from April 2006 to the present in Tal Afar, Sinjar, Al Kissik, and Rabiya, all part of the western Ninewa Province," said Sarmiento. "Although each project varies in cost due to the scope of work, we have managed a total of over \$9 million throughout fiscal year 2006,

and paid out almost \$50,000 in battle damage payments."

Sarmiento said the projects his company has worked on are all important to the local people and Iraqi government. "B Company has been instrumental in the re-development of the infrastructure of the city of Tal Afar as evidenced by the new Municipal Building and the Tal Afar Adult Literacy Center. The Sinjar team recently opened the Sinjar maternity ward which will help to lower the mortality rate of newborns in that city, and Kissik will begin delivering blankets to needy people in that area. The Rabiya team continues to work on road and water projects. These projects will help the locals live better because we have assisted the Iraqi people in establishing essential services such as electricity and water."

Dare said getting to meet with the Iraqi people and earning the local leadership's trust has been a very rewarding aspect of her job and she is proud of how well her Soldiers have been performing. "There are definitely a lot of benefits that come out of the risks we take. Hopefully the anti-Iraqi forces get out of here because the Iraqis have so many things they need to fix without having to worry about AIF attacks," she said. "I see the lower enlisted Soldiers that go out there and do things that captains, majors and senior noncommissioned officers would normally be doing. I am very proud of what our Soldiers have done and how they have stepped into the responsibilities that they fill. The situation forces you to dig down deep and find the other aspect of yourself that you never knew you had—that you could be strong."

2-7 Cavalry conducts first com

Iraqi Army, US troops exert influence outside of city

STORY BY SGT. 1ST CLASS BRIAN SIPP
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

With a flurry of coordinated ti including Iraqi co Soldiers and U.S. U.S. Air Force g and aircraft, e disposal special and their working team, and a psycho team, converged questioning loca any signs of insu

“We will never AIF. Having a plan that attacks outside the city of AIF to react to t Eric Welsh, com Cavalry and Coa with the Iraqi Ar

As the Coalition through the city shifted from a power to an earn how they could Tall Aswad, said 2-7 Cavalry civi “Our mission consequence mar Harhai. “Since necessary, as no fight, we moved and candy to the to show goodwill toward the reside

As children soldiers and t counterparts for candy, Noradde time to sit down Tall Aswad and h assessment of the

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TALL ASWAD, Iraq – Soldiers from the 4th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division teamed with Soldiers from the 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division in a joint operation Jan. 12 that highlighted the ability to project combat power away from Mosul into the surrounding towns and countryside.

“The main purpose of this operation is to detain targeted personalities operating in the city of Tall Aswad that have ties to [anti-Iraqi forces] activities, capture weapons and [improvised explosive device] caches, and show those that may be operating in the “grey area” that we are observing their activities, and have the capability to act outside the city,” said Col. Stephen Twitty, commander of 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

Operation Harpy began in the pre-dawn hours with the mobilization of a ground assault convoy made up of IA troops led by Brig. Gen. Noraddeen, commander of the 4-2 IAD and the main effort of the cordon and search phase of the mission.

Simultaneously, combat troops from the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, boarded four UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters and air assaulted in to set up four separate blocking positions on the north and south of Objective Beowulf, the operational term used for Tall Aswad, and target of the mission. Their focus was to form an outer cordon to block any anti-Iraqi forces trying to leave the city once the IA arrived and began moving through the town, according to the mission brief conducted at 2-7 Cavalry’s headquarters the day prior.



(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Brogan, Combat Camera)

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division load into a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter for Operation Harpy Jan. 12. The mission, a joint effort between the cavalry unit and the Iraqi Army, is the first combat air assault by the 2-7 Cav. since Vietnam, and highlighted the capability to project combat power into the surrounding areas of Mosul.



(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brian Sipp, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

Iraqi children from the town of Tall Aswad line up eagerly for gifts and candy distributed by a 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment civil affairs team during Operation Harpy Jan. 12.

Combat air assault since Vietnam

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SEE ASSAULT, PAGE 21



(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brian Sipp, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

An Iraqi Army soldier happily distributes gifts and candy to children in the town of Tall Aswad during Operation Harpy Jan. 12.

2 IA gains full independence of operations

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. PAULA TAYLOR
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

AL KINDI, Iraq—Coalition Forces joined their Iraqi Army counterparts in a Memorandum of Understanding signing Jan. 15 to mark the official handover of the 2nd Iraqi Army Division from Coalition to Iraqi control.



Col. Stephen Twitty, commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, representing Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Mixon, commander, 25th Infantry Division, signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Gen. Jamal, commander, 2nd Iraqi Army Jan. 15 in Al Kindi, Iraq. The MOU marks the handover of Jamal's division from U.S. control to the Iraqi Ground Forces Command.

Prior to the MOU, the 2nd IA was working under the direction of the 25th Infantry Division and commander of Multi-National Forces-North, Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Mixon. The memorandum signing turns control of the 2 IA over to the Iraqi Ground Forces Command.

Signing the documents, which were written in both English and Arabic, was Gen. Jamal, commander, 2 IA, and Col. Stephen Twitty, commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, who was representing Mixon. "This ceremony is so important today because the 2nd Iraqi Army Division has demonstrated their capability to lead without Coalition Forces," said Twitty. "They have demonstrated their ability to fight terrorism and conduct themselves as a division. They will be in the lead and we will be there to assist them whenever required."

During the ceremony, Jamal addressed the Iraqi attendees and his soldiers. "We have worked together

with Coalition Forces since the formation of this division," said Jamal. "During this time, we have been getting our equipment and training our soldiers. Now, today, we are ready to take full control of the battle space. We will continue to work together and cooperate with the Coalition Forces. We are confident we will succeed because the 2nd Division has trained hard and is well equipped to deal with any situation and handle the security of Mosul."

Twitty, who also addressed the group, agreed with Jamal that the unit is ready to take over the battle space in Mosul.

"This is truly a historic event for the people of Iraq and the 2nd Iraqi Army Division. On behalf of General Mixon, the 25th Infantry Division, and the 4th Brigade Combat Team, I would like to applaud you for this historic occasion that you are about to embark on. This division has more than proven it is capable of bringing peace and security to the people of Mosul. You have gained the trust and confidence of the people in the city, the Iraqi police, and Coalition Forces. Your soldiers have demonstrated the capability to destroy terrorists wherever they may hide. I look forward to watching you lead your organization throughout the streets of Mosul. You are the future of Iraq," said Twitty.



Col. Stephen Twitty, commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, congratulates Gen. Jamal, commander, 2nd Iraqi Army Division after the Memorandum of Understanding signing Jan. 15 in Al Kindi, Iraq. The MOU releases the 2 IA from U.S. control to the Iraqi Ground Forces Command.

for them. Most of them have never experienced any of this, so they were pretty excited to learn.”

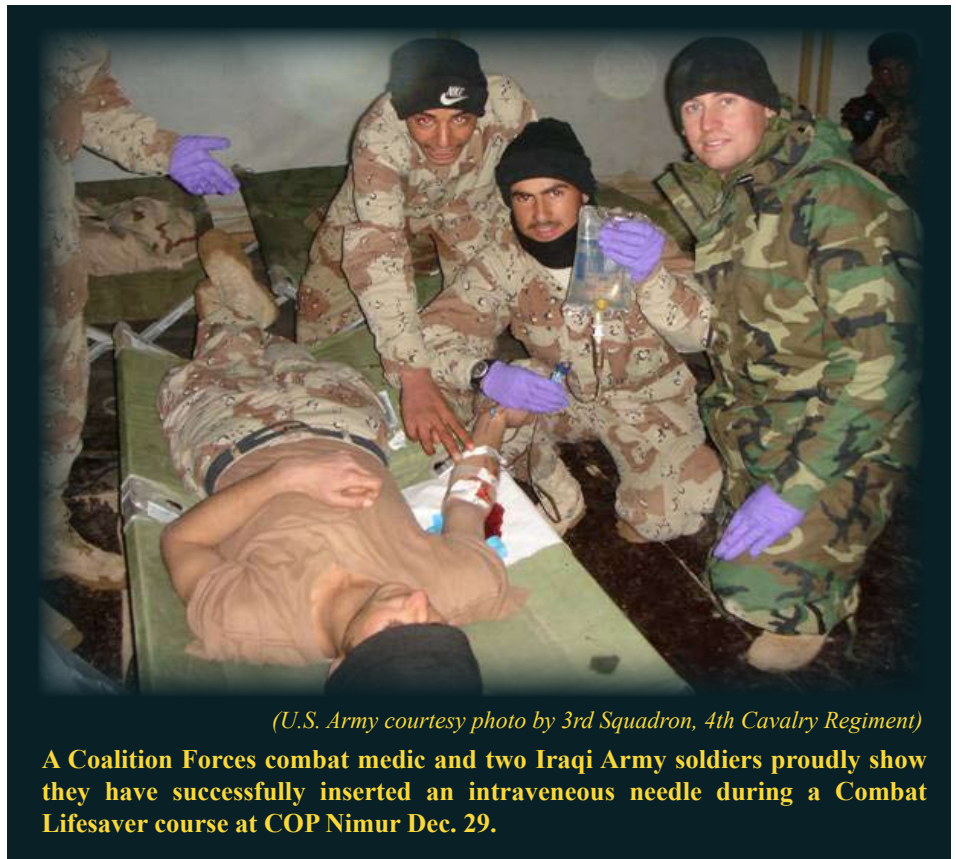
Kyle said they organized the course so that basic instruction would be given in the morning and that they would break into smaller groups for hands-on, practical exercises in the afternoons.

“After each block of instruction, I had my group pair up, then they were given scenarios and tasks they had to practice on each other. I walked them through exercises, like splinting a fracture, and let them try it on each other. When they did it correctly, they would switch roles and do it again. If they didn’t do it correctly, I would make sure they understood what they did wrong, then they would get to do it again.”

Some of the classes taught were treating abdominal, head and chest injuries, splinting fractures, applying pressure dressings and tourniquets, how to stop a patient’s bleeding, treating for shock, and airway management, he said.

For the airway management class, Kyle said, they first taught the group how to check for a pulse. “Some of the students had never known how to check for a pulse,” said Kyle. “They were all anxious to learn.”

Once they learned about checking for a pulse and were taught the head-tilt, chin-lift method of opening an airway to restore breathing, Kyle said the students were shown how to insert a J-tube into an unconscious patient. The J-tube can be inserted into a trauma victim and left temporarily unattended so care can be given to a more critical patient, Kyle said, which is one of the reasons why it is important to learn. “American Soldiers normally don’t want to practice with the J-



(U.S. Army courtesy photo by 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment)

A Coalition Forces combat medic and two Iraqi Army soldiers proudly show they have successfully inserted an intravenous needle during a Combat Lifesaver course at COP Nimur Dec. 29.

tube because it is inserted into the throat to keep the airway open which causes a gag reflex,” said Kyle. “Some of the Iraqi students wanted to try it. It’s not dangerous, just uncomfortable, so we let them practice on each other.”

At the end of the course, each student was issued a certificate of completion, written in both English and Arabic, and signed by the squadron commander.

Kyle said teaching this course was something the B Troop commander, Capt. Samuel Benson, wanted to do for the Iraqi security forces. “He wanted to set something up,” said Kyle. “It was a collaborative effort with the [military transition team] to put this together.”

The 3-4 Cavalry medics will next be in the process of training the ISF medics to teach this course. Kyle said his unit plans to teach this course again around Jan. 22 with the Iraqis in the lead. “We will help them teach the course, but mostly it

will be them. The goal is for them to one day be able to teach CLS on their own.”

Another Coalition Forces Soldier, who assisted in the class, said he knows the training the ISF received was invaluable.

“The Iraqi forces were eager and willing to learn,” said Spc. Lucas Oppelt, combat medic and South Bend, Ind., native. “With the integration of combat life-saving skills into their training, they will be confident in each other’s abilities to save lives on the front line.”

Kyle agreed with Oppelt and said he enjoyed spending time with the Iraqis. “I had a really good time teaching them. They asked a lot of questions, were attentive, and excited to be learning something new. With these new life-saving skills that the Iraqi Army soldiers are starting to acquire, they will be better suited to help save their fellow soldiers in combat. I’m glad to have been a part of that.”

Building becomes 'shining light' for Iraqis

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. ARMANDO MONROIG
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

TAL AFAR, Iraq – City leaders in Tal Afar received more than additional office space with the grand opening of a new building at the city's government center, Dec. 20.

"This building is a symbol for the people of Tal Afar," said Mayor Najim Abdullah Abid Al-Jibouri. "With this building, the people of Tal Afar show their insistence on building their city in spite of the hard situation in Iraq and Tal Afar."

The recently constructed building will house the mayor's office, along with those of other city officials.

More importantly, the building has already become a symbol of the continuing progress being made by the citizens of Tal Afar to be self-reliant, and the dedication of their leaders to keep moving forward, said Lt. Col. Malcolm Frost, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment commander.



A Soldier from 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division hands a flag to a young Iraqi after a grand opening celebration held for new government offices opened at the government center in Tal Afar, Iraq, Dec. 20.



Young Iraqi girls wave flags and cheer in celebration of the grand opening of a new building at the government center in Tal Afar, Dec. 20.

"It demonstrates the Iraqi security forces are taking the lead," said Frost, whose unit, part of the 25th Infantry Division provides military support to the Iraq Security Forces operating in Tal Afar. "This becomes the shining light for the seat of governance here."

Frost said the new building is "a visible marker for the transition" of Tal Afar's government to a body which continues to grow less dependent on U.S. influence. To that end, members of the 3-4 Cav. Regt. have been supporting Iraqi leaders in the western Ninewa Province for the past five months.

"It makes the Iraqis feel good," said Frost. "It makes them proud that they are moving forward, can do things on their own and are in charge of their future."

Maj. Gen. Benjamin Mixon, the commander of the 25th Inf. Div., headquartered in Tikrit, attended

the grand opening and commended the city's leaders on their unity.

"This is what Iraq needs – Iraqis coming together," said Mixon during a press conference held inside the new government building.

"The coalition will stand with you," he said. "It is up to Iraqis to take control of Iraq. I know this great country and people can do that."



Duraid Kashmoula, governor of Iraq's Ninewa Province (center,) and Mayor Najim Abdullah Abid Al-Jibouri participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony, Dec. 20 in Tal Afar.

EOD Soldiers work with, train IA counterparts

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS BRIAN SIPP
4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

FOB MAREZ, Iraq – Soldiers from the 18th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, based out of Fort Bragg, N.C., assumed the role of mentor and observer to 15 troops from the 2nd Iraqi Army Division who demonstrated their abilities by conducting an operation to destroy unexploded ordnance Jan. 7.

“We are responsible for training and certifying all of the Iraqi EOD soldiers in both 2IA and 3IA,” said Capt. Jim Hartman, commander of the 18th EOD Co. “This particular validation mission for the IA involves the removal of [unexploded ordnance] from an ammunition supply point that had suffered from an explosion and fire here some time ago.”

The 2IA soldiers began by identifying the rounds that were scattered within the debris of the ASP. Once they were identified, they were loaded onto a trailer and taken to the actual demolition site on the far side of FOB Marez for reduction.

“These troops will be conducting this disposal completely on their own, from start to finish,” said Hartman. “My guys will be observing and standing by only in case they have any questions or need any assistance. It is an Iraqi-run operation, through and through.”

“The 2IA soldiers here today are all Level 3 certified,” explained Capt. John Engroos, a member of the 2IA Military Transition Team living with the soldiers at their base in Al Kindi. “During instruction in Levels 1-3, the Iraqis are taught everything from basic explosive characteristics and capabilities, to the proper identification of rounds. It fully qualifies them,

after successful validation, to execute UXO reduction independently and handle all matters pertaining to proper handling of explosives. Level 4 instruction is the final phase of training and is conducted at a school in Basra. It involves the procedures of traveling on-site and handling discovered IEDs in the field,” added Engroos.



An Iraqi explosive ordinance disposal specialist with the 2nd Iraqi Army Division works side-by-side with a Coalition Soldier from the 18th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, based out of Fort Bragg, N.C., to identify and remove unexploded ordnance from FOB Marez Jan. 7.

The 2IA currently has five troops attending Level 4 training and several more scheduled for the next class. The end state, according to Hartman, is a fully-qualified team within the Iraqi Army that can independently operate and eliminate the IED threat posed to Iraqi security forces, Iraqi civilians, and Coalition troops.

“The 15 IA soldiers we have here are all very well trained at executing the tasks; they are very professional,” said 1st Sgt. Eugene Salet, 18th EOD Co. “They are highly motivated and well led by their lieutenant and eager to learn.”

After the old mortar and artillery rounds were unloaded at the detonation site, the 2IA soldiers stacked them into two piles and placed C-4 charges on them to complete the reduction. The two stacks were necessary because of safety limitations in place regarding the size of controlled detonations, said

Hartman. Once they were rigged, the IA troops and their Coalition counterparts moved a safe distance away on the other side of a hill and activated the explosives, eliminating the old munitions. An immediate post-blast analysis of the area was conducted to visually determine if everything had been reduced successfully.

“What a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon; great weather, great training, and a safe and successful elimination of some explosives that won’t find their way onto the streets in the form of an IED,” said Hartman.

Notes from home

The staff of the public affairs office, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div., has been posting a Web log (blog) in the El Paso Times newspaper's online Web site since our arrival in Kuwait. So far, we have been averaging more than 3,000 'hits' on the counter per week. As with all blogs, anyone can post a response. We have recieved comments from family members and friends of the brigade and will use this page to post their messages to our troops. To visit the blog site: <http://elpasotimes.typepad.com/longknife>

Comments from the Blog site.....

Hello from ALABAMA to the 1/9...In case you get to read this, 'Hey Matthew, we love you and miss you!! Stay Safe!!

Posted by: Terry (Burleson) Walls | December 27, 2006 at 07:09 AM -----

This was awesome!! Cant wait to see more. I Love you SGT Lowe and miss you!! Hi Parris, Shack, Beck and all the other guys out there. Stay Safe

Posted by: Beth Lowe | December 28, 2006 at 09:28 AM -----

Thank you so much for keeping us informed on our loved ones. To David, I love you and can't wait for you to come home. Remember you are my everything.

Posted by: Amanda Warren | January 02, 2007 at 08:02 PM -----

Hello Everyone,

This site has just made me a very happy person.

I was contacted by a 2-12 Cav Reg Thunderhorse family member to let me know a brother in the same unit as my nephew, 1SGT Kenny Power with B-co.

I was so pleased, I e-mail my nephew to let him know and how happy about sites like this help people of the same unit connect.

Well done 2-12 Cav Reg Bloggers.

Posted by: Gregory Santana, Pico Rivera, CA | January 05, 2007 at 07:44 PM -----

This is a great site! Thanks so much for keeping us family members informed with how things are going over there. And to my loving husband and soldier, PFC Shearer...We love you! Stay safe!

Posted by: Mindy Shearer | January 10, 2007 at 01:19 AM -----

Hey just wanted to say this was great to find. My husband is in Alpha Battery 5/82 SSG. Baltazar Vela. I just wanted to tell him, the Girls and I Love and Miss him very much and to come home safe!

Posted by: Deborah Vela | January 18, 2007 at 11:41 AM -----

To my wonderful husband Erik,

May God keep you and all 4th BCT soldiers safe! Hope this New Year brings continued strength and wisdom to make the right choices. Stay vigilant! I miss you tons. All my love, All my life, Kylene

Posted by: Kylene Davis | December 28, 2006 at 09:15 AM -----

I just want to say that I am pleased to hear that the men and women over there are still able to celebrate the holidays of our country. I am proud of my husband and all of the soldiers in 4-1 Cav. We pray for all of your safty over there at this time and your safe return home to your families. Jason we think about you everyday and miss you more and more. It is hard not having you here but we know that you will be home soon. I love you and take care my love.

Posted by: Bambi Hanneken | December 28, 2006 at 08:22 PM -----

To my handsome husband, SFC Villarreal,

I hope you and all your guys are doing ok. Know that we are all thinking of you and miss you. Be careful and all of you come home safe. I love you with all my heart. Your loving wife, Mona

Posted by: Ramona Villarreal | December 30, 2006 at 08:48 PM -----

Thank-you for keeping all of us informed in what is going on over there. The News doesn't tell us anything. They concentrate on Bagdad. Please stay safe & GOD BLESS & KEEP ALL OF YOU in the 1ST.CAV. Proud Parents of two 1st Cav. Soldiers

Posted by: Gary & Charlotte DeBuysere | December 21, 2006 at 09:25 PM -----

What a wonderful world we have able to get some info from you in that worn torn area. Please keep up the good work and keep your heads up cause you might think you are alone but "NOT" We are all over here wishing we could be by your side. Mother of Sgt D.J. Rogers 4BCT ICD

Posted by: Kathleen Rogers | January 04, 2007 at 12:33 PM



(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brian Sipp, 4-1Cav. Public Affairs)
Brig. Gen. Noraddeen, commander of the 4th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division (left) converses with the town leader of Tall Aswad (right) during the wrap-up of Operation Harpy Jan. 12.

ASSAULT, *cont'd from pages 14-15*

forces departed as quickly as they had arrived. The residents had seen the combat power of their Iraqi Army, supported by Coalition forces, and they had also seen the genuine concern for their well-being as evidenced by the reactions to the IA and civil affairs team's outreach.

"The joint operation we conducted [Jan. 12] with the 4th Brigade, 2IA was a great example of what the ISF is doing to make their country safe. We'll continue to have a flexible, adaptive game plan that attacks the AIF across every line of operation inside our area of operation; and that includes lethal and non-lethal solutions," added Welsh.

FOR SALE BY OWNERS :

A slightly used, 1985, government-issued, M998 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV). This highly acclaimed desert-riding 4-wheel-drive vehicle is a must for any outdoor enthusiast. The two-tone, four-door, off-road truck comfortably seats up to four passengers and an expired elk. The back compartment is spacious enough for fishing tackle, including large coolers and camping gear, or hunting equipment. The doors are steel reinforced and the windows are constructed of high-quality, bullet-proof glass. The truck runs great, but needs just a little bit of work, such as: needs new driver's side door latch (or you can manually hold door shut), mirrors (currently broken and one is tied in place), three windows with latches (currently broken), a whole new suspension (currently, this one is completely shot), dashboard lights (currently do not light up), windshield wipers, a passenger-side rear door (currently held in place by 550 cord), heater (currently blows cool air), speedometer (currently does not gage speed) and a new braking system. Engine and transmission are rock-solid and reliable. This vehicle is a must-have classic from a previous era and would add value to any car collection. Will consider trading for non-tactical vehicle or fiber optic cables for faster internet connection. If interested, contact the 4th BCT Public Affairs Office.



Driver's-side mirror glass broken, and tied in place with rope, otherwise, mirror is in excellent condition.



1985 PAO FOB-Runner is in perfect running condition except for a few character flaws, as noted in paragraph above.



Rear seats severely worn, front seat missing, interior torn apart, otherwise, in good shape.



Passenger seat missing, and batteries need replaced because they leak. Truck does come with spare parts (see photo) that appear useless, but may be collector's items worth keeping.

HeadHunter News



COMPILED BY 2ND LT. RICHARD HUTTON
1-9 Cav. Regmt. Public Affairs Representative

**1-9 CAV(ARS)
"Head Hunters"**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, Iraq—The Headhunter Squadron helped ring in the new year with some additional festivities; promotions for three staff sergeants to the rank of sergeants first class.

The ceremony was unique in many ways, not least of which was the fact that these were the first three Headhunter noncommissioned officers promoted since the unit's arrival in Iraq in late November.

Col. Stephen Twitty and Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Frennier joined the Headhunters for the New Years' day ceremony, coming to honor the service and contributions of the three outstanding NCOs. Sergeants 1st Class Rahim Gaymon, Headquarters Troop, Eric Sherman, D Troop, and Michael Williams, C Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment were the individuals honored.

With more than forty years of service between them, Twitty recognized each individual as the embodiment of the Warrior Ethos, and examples for their junior Soldiers to emulate.

"I can't think of a better place to be promoted than Iraq," said Williams.

Each thanked their Soldiers, officers and NCOs for the hard work, dedication and love that they have poured into the men and unit.

"The Army is about Honor, Duty, and Love, and if you don't love your Soldiers, and love what you do, you're in the wrong place," said Twitty.



Col. Stephen Twitty, commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, congratulates Staff Sgt. Michael Williams, C Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment after promoting him to sergeant first class Jan. 1.



Staff Sergeants Rahim Gaymon, Headquarters Troop, Eric Sherman, D Troop, and Michael Williams, C Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment show their certificates of promotion to sergeant first class.

Ghost Battalion News



2-7 CAV
"Ghost"

STORY BY 1ST LT. JOHN AMES

2-7 Cav. Regmt. Public Affairs Representative

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, Iraq – While the rest of his family celebrated Christmas, it was just another day on the job for Spc. Ryan Hauk. As any Soldier can tell you, war rarely takes a break for holidays, and the men of D Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment can attest to that from first-hand experience; Hauk and his platoon spent Christmas day pulling quick-reaction force duty in the city of Mosul.

Hauk serves as the gunner for his company commander, Capt. Andrew Kiser. "I love my job," Hauk declared. "I'm a seventh generation infantryman and I love getting out there [to catch] the bad guys."

Kiser tries to be present for as many of his company's engagements as possible and, as a result, his vehicle crew spends much more time on missions than most other Soldiers. In the face of these rapid-tempo missions, Kiser explained that Hauk always has a great attitude and is always ready to roll, even in the face of great adversity.

Only a few weeks into the deployment, Hauk suffered an injury when a bullet impacted his helmet causing a concussion. "I had a pretty good headache for a few days, but I was ready to go back out," Hauk said of the incident. Within a couple of days, his commander determined his injury warranted a Purple Heart, which he is scheduled to be presented in late Jan.

Hauk and the rest of the men and women of the 2-7 Cavalry have been helping the local Iraqi army brigades patrol Mosul and the surrounding area. The job is demanding, he said, and, aside from the occasional letter from the states, pretty thankless. "I try to stay motivated and sometimes you get discouraged," said Hauk. "But we gotta get the bad guys off the street. That's the bottom line."

Despite having plenty to keep him busy in a job

he enjoys performing, Hauk said he really missed his wife, Angela, and his three year old son, Logan, who spent Christmas with his family. "My family is really tight because we're Scottish," explained Hauk with a smile. Having fourteen nieces and nephews, does not hurt either. Hauk said that his large family meets every Christmas, and with so many people to help take care of his wife and son, he was never worried about them, just regretful he was unable to spend that time at home.



Purple Heart recipient, Spc. Ryan Hauk, infantryman, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, takes a break to pose with two Iraqi interpreters assigned to his unit.



Spc. Ryan Hauk (center), infantryman, poses with two of his vehicle crew members after a mission. Hauk is assigned to D Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment in Mosul, Iraq.

Thunder Horse News



2-12 CAV
"Thunder Horse"

STORY AND PHOTO BY PFC. SHEA BUTLER
7th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Before the sun even thought to grace the Iraqi sky, a company of Soldiers put their protective gear on, passed their lucky horseshoe around to be kissed by each individual, loaded their vehicles, waited for the word to drive off into the sunrise, and hoped for some luck before their mission to a Baghdad neighborhood.

The mission for the Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division was to provide operational oversight to the Iraqi Army as they searched a neighborhood in Baghdad Dec. 13, after receiving intelligence from locals about anti-Iraqi forces in the area.

Troops from Company D had more than luck on their side. They had days of preparation to make sure their mission would run successfully.

They started basic maintenance on their vehicles and weapons two days prior to the mission. They sat through rehearsals and briefs to get a good grasp on their mission and intentions, said Capt. Darren Fowler, commanding officer, Co. D, 2nd Bn., 12th Cav. Regt., 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div.

Upon arrival to the neighborhood, Soldiers met up with their Iraqi Army counterparts and the search began.

"I was impressed with my Soldiers professionalism throughout



Staff Sgt. Kevin Betts, a Soldier with Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, also a native of Wynnewood, Okla., loads a mortar round found in a Baghdad neighborhood in the back of a humvee after the Iraqi army and U.S. Soldiers searched and found weapons caches Dec. 13.

the mission," said Fowler, a native of Union, S.C.

The thorough search of houses, vehicles and people paid off for both American and Iraqi uniformed personnel. Together they found what they were looking for.

Three weapon caches, two shape charges and some improvised explosive device-making material were found, Fowler said.

This isn't the first time they have searched this area, but it was one of the biggest stashes of insurgent weapons they have found, he added.

Missions like this help deny insurgents the ability to operate and

build confidence between the locals and the IA's, Fowler said.

"We are out here so insurgents don't have a safe haven," said Pfc. Joseph Roco, gunner, Co. D.

Taking the weapons off the streets doesn't just immobilize insurgents, it also protects the locals living in the area, explained Roco the native of Glenwood Spring, Colo.

Cooperation between the IA and coalition forces is getting better and it shows when there are successful missions, Fowler said.

"It was an over all good mission," Fowler said. "We brought everyone back safe and we found caches."

Black Dragon News



5-82 FA “Black Dragons”

COMPILED BY 1ST LT. JUSTIN GOMEZ AND
1ST LT. BENNETT FREEMAN
5-82 FA Public Affairs Representatives



main and alternate supply routes in the Tigris River Valley. They have also been improving the level of force protection of traffic control points and have emplaced anti-improvised explosive device signs throughout the area of operation.

In addition to providing improved security levels, they have been training by reinforcing basic Soldier skills such as rifle marksmanship, communications, and first aid.

“Our overall mission is clear—we must make sure that we support the ISF so that they can dominate their battle space,” said 1st Lt. James Patton, platoon leader, B Battery. “Our Soldiers are teaching the Iraqi Army to not only have faith in their leadership, but more importantly, to have faith in themselves.”

QAYYARAH, Iraq - Each day, as the sun rises over the horizon, the Black Dragons of the 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery are leaving the Forward Operating Base to assist in making positive changes. The Soldiers are accomplishing several different missions; from meeting with the people and leaders of the villages on both sides of the Tigris River, to promoting the use of a representative democratic government.

“The Tigris River Valley is very unique,” said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Fulbright, platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery. “It affords our Soldiers the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the Iraq experience.”

The Black Dragon troops are tapping every available resource to assist the Iraqi security forces in the accomplishment of their mission. “We are teaching and learning from a few very gifted Iraqi mechanics,” said 1st Lt. Joseph Coniglio, battalion motor officer.

Both on and off the FOB, the 5-82 FA has teamed up with the Iraqi Army to fight the terrorists in their area of operation. One way they have been doing this is by working toward improving the security along



TF Ready News



**4th BSTB
"Vigilant"**

STORY BY 1ST LT. BRIDGETTE BELL
4th STB Public Affairs Representative

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, Iraq—Task Force Ready marked the New Year with the donning of the 1st Cavalry Division shoulder sleeve insignia.

Battalion commander, Lt. Col. Marvin A. Hedstrom, Special Troops Battalion, visited all of his companies and put the insignia on each Soldier individually during the combat patch ceremony.

"It was my way of saying thank you for all that STB Soldiers do," said Hedstrom. "The wearing of the combat patch signifies the unit's solidarity as one team, one fight. We all wear them today as a task force and I want to stress the importance that every Soldier brings to this team."

All Soldiers assigned or attached to the battalion, who have met the requirements for deployed service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08, may now wear the 1st Cavalry Division combat patch beneath their U.S. flag on the right sleeve.

Spc. Duane A. Eddy, Jr. of B Company felt "the patch ceremony reminded me that we are making a contribution to the Iraqi people."

Following the patch ceremonies, the Task Force Ready gathered at the Community Activities Center to bring in the New Year. They watched a video prepared by the Chaplain, promoted six Soldiers, and witnessed the re-enlistment of Pvt. Estanislado Soto of A Company.



(Courtesy photo by Special Troops Battalion)

Soldiers of B Company, Special Troops Battalion remove their combat patches from their pockets in preparation of STB commander, Lt. Col. Marvin Hedstrom's arrival for the combat patch ceremony.



(Courtesy photo by Special Troops Battalion)

Soldiers of E Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, who are attached to the Special Troops Battalion, await their turn for the STB commander, Lt. Col. Marvin Hedstrom, to put their combat patch on their right shoulder.

Rough Rider News



27TH BSB
"Rough Rider"

BY CAPT. KENNETH MCGRAW
27th BSB Public Affairs Representative

AL QOSH, Iraq—Members of the 27th Brigade Support Battalion made their second trip up to the town of Al Qosh during the beginning of Jan to find out how their unit could help the locals that live in the town.

During the trip, 1st Lt. Kendra Evers, battalion civil affairs officer, had a chance to sit down and talk to the mayor and ask if there was anything the town needed. One of the items, he said, was blankets for the refugees in the area.

The mayor explained that over 4,000 people have fled Baghdad, escaping religious and cultural persecution, to seek refuge in Al Qosh.

"Al Qosh is a predominantly Christian area, and the mayor and his people were very friendly towards us," said Evers.

Accompanying Evers was the battalion physician's assistant, Capt. Keary Johnston, and battalion pediatrician, Capt. Dina Parekh. While they were there, the two medical



(U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Kendra Evers, 27th BSB, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div.)

Capt. Keary Johnston (center), physician's assistant, 27th Brigade Support Battalion, visits the town of Al Qosh, Iraq to provide medical assistance to the local people. Johnston, a resident of Pennsylvania, assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, treated more than 80 Al Qosh residents during her visit.

personnel provided health assessments to more than 80 people.

"The people of the town greeted us with a warm welcome and hot tea," said Parekh. "In doing assessments, mainly of women and children, we were impressed by the workups many of the people with complicated

medical conditions already had, and the medications they were prescribed."

Before leaving the town, Evers' group gave boxes of school supplies and clothing to the mayor to distribute to his people and said the mayor was pleased and vowed to distribute the items throughout the town.

In addition to the items left with the mayor, Evers and her group also visited the local orphanage and distributed soccer balls, which were donated by 850 KOA News radio in Denver, to the children.



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